

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please amend the paragraph on page 22, lines 12-22, as shown below:

As used herein, forwarding the packet may refer to forwarding the packet to another device or forwarding the packet to another protocol layer on a single device. For example, a packet may be ~~forward~~ forwarded to the IP layer of a device for processing or discarded prior to the packet being provided to the IP layer. Furthermore, for clarity, the embodiments of the present invention have been described without reference to subnet masks or multiple subnets per interface. As will be appreciated by those of skill in the art in light of the present disclosure, preferably, subnets masks are utilized in evaluation of the IP addresses. Furthermore, multiple subnets may be provided for a single interface or multiple interfaces may be provided for a single device while still incorporating the teachings of the present invention.